

GUIDE TO THE YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK ARCHIVES

The Yellowstone National Park Archives is the remarkably complete administrative record of the first national park, and as such is a unique historical resource. By definition, the Archives consists of documents created or received by the National Park Service in the administration of Yellowstone National Park.

The Yellowstone National Park Archives is an affiliated archives of the National Archives and Records Administration. Through a 1978 cooperative agreement between Yellowstone National Park and the National Archives, permanent federal records created in the management of the park remain in Yellowstone instead of following normal records disposition schedules, which would result in records being transferred to National Archives regional records centers.

Within the arrangement of the National Archives, the Yellowstone National Park Archives are part of Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service. The records are maintained in 5 grouped series. These are:

1. Pre-1916 Records--This series includes records that date from the late 1870s. The majority of the records were created or received during the U.S. Army's administration of Yellowstone prior to the creation of the National Park Service in 1916. Records in this series include correspondence, bound volumes of letters sent and received, and station log books and registers.

2. National Park Service Records--This series contains records from the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916 to the present. Over the years, the National Park Service has used several filing systems. At present, these records are organized into twelve broad categories or sub-series:

A—Administration and Management

C—Concessions

D—Development and Maintenance

F—Fiscal

H—History and Archeology

K—Interpretation and Information

L—Lands and Recreation Planning

N—Natural and Social Sciences

P—Personnel

S—Supplies, Procurement, and Property

W—Laws and Legal Matters

Y—Forestry

3. Yellowstone Park Company Records—This series consists primarily of records of the Yellowstone Park Company which provided a variety of services to park visitors from the 1880s until 1980, when the United States Government terminated their contract to operate in the park. The organization of the company resulted in a number of associated company names (such as Yellowstone Park Transportation Company, Yellowstone Park Camping Company, Yellowstone Park Hotel Company, and Yellowstone Park Boat Company). This series of records also includes donated records of other park concessioners, including Hamilton's Stores, TW Recreational Services, and Xanterra Parks and Resorts.

4. Manuscripts and Special Collections—This series includes a variety of records relating to Yellowstone but created by specific individuals rather than representing the central filing system of the park. This series includes personal papers of employees as well as manuscripts on Yellowstone topics.

5. Oral History—This collection consists of audio recordings. Formats include cassette tape, reel-to-reel tape, and compact disc. These tapes range from recordings of thermal features to interviews with park employees and Yellowstone area residents. Some interviews include written transcripts or summary sheets.